

HUGHESVILLE, MD – Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD) today joined state and local officials at the MD 5 Business Southbound Ramp to the new Hughesville Bypass to mark the completion of the bypass, which will substantially improve traffic for those traveling through Hughesville, and motorists using MD 5 in St. Mary's and Charles Counties and MD 231 in Calvert and Charles Counties. Officials at the ceremony also announced the opening of a new park-and-ride facility in La Plata. Both projects were supported in part with federal funding secured by Congressman Hoyer.

"I am proud to be here today to celebrate the grand opening of the Hughesville Bypass," stated Congressman Hoyer. "The successful completion of this critical project is a testament to the strong partnership between the local jurisdictions, the state, and the federal government.

"Anyone who has encountered miles-long traffic backups along MD 5 or 231 will reap the benefits of the Hughesville bypass, which will significantly improve traffic flow and efficiency, make our roads safer by reducing congestion, and overall, help accommodate growth in Southern Maryland. This newly completed project, along with other high-priority transportation projects in our region, will assuredly address some of our major transportation needs and improve safety and traffic conditions for those who work, live and play in Southern Maryland."

The 3.2-mile Hughesville Bypass is a four-lane highway located between north of Gallant Green Road and south of Deborah Drive around the eastern side of Hughesville, Charles County. Construction on the bypass began in 2004, and with its completion, will provide congestion relief for the more than 41,000 motorists who travel through the Town of Hughesville, and who use MD 5 from St. Mary's and Charles Counties and MD 231 from Calvert and Charles Counties for their regular commute. The traffic count along the bypass is estimated to increase to 68,000 by the year 2025 due to the expected growth in Southern Maryland.

"The Hughesville Bypass is the first of many projects we will deliver for BRAC in the coming years," said Lt. Governor Brown. "The strong partnership between the federal government and our State, county and municipal leaders as well as continued regional cooperation will be the key to our success in meeting the needs of Southern Maryland and BRAC priorities across the State."

In addition to the opening of the Hughesville Bypass, officials today announced the completion of the Maryland Transit Administration's 277-space, park-and-ride lot located at the corner of Washington Avenue and Heritage Green Parkway in La Plata. The new park-and-ride lot, which

will open to riders next week, will provide dedicated parking for residents using commuter bus Routes #901 and #907 from La Plata in Charles County to Washington, D.C. The La Plata facility is the first of six new lots to be built in Southern Maryland as part of the Southern Maryland Commuter Bus Initiative. Over the past four years, Congressman Hoyer has worked to secure \$11.5 million in federal funding for this project, and there is an additional \$1.2 million included in the house passed FY 08 transportation bill, which passed the House in July.

"Today marks another significant development for Southern Maryland commuters with the announcement of the forthcoming opening of a park-and-ride lot in nearby La Plata later this month," stated Rep. Hoyer. "This space lot is part of the Southern Maryland Commuter Bus Initiative, which - like the Hughesville Bypass - will make the commute to Washington, DC easier for the residents of Southern Maryland."

According to the Maryland Department of Transportation, other construction projects to improve capacity in Southern Maryland are scheduled to start by the end of the year, including work on MD 2/4 and MD 231 in Calvert County and MD 237 in St. Mary's County.

"As one of the fastest growing areas in the Mid-Atlantic region, Southern Maryland faces unique transportation challenges that we must be prepared to address," stated Rep. Hoyer. "I am pleased to have been able to secure federal resources for both the Hughesville Bypass and the Southern Maryland Commuter Bus Initiative, and remain committed to working with state, local and federal officials on future projects to ensure the efficiency and security of our state's transportation infrastructure."

# # #